

# **Crown Pastoral Land Tenure Review**

**Lease name : Mt St BATHANS**

**Lease number : PO 116**

## **Conservation Resources Report - Part 5**

As part of the process of Tenure Review, advice on significant inherent values within the pastoral lease is provided by Department of Conservation officials in the form of a Conservation Resources Report. This report is the result of outdoor survey and inspection. It is a key piece of information for the development of a preliminary consultation document.

Note: Plans which form part of the Conservation Resources Report are published separately.

These documents are all released under the Official information Act 1982.

**September 06**

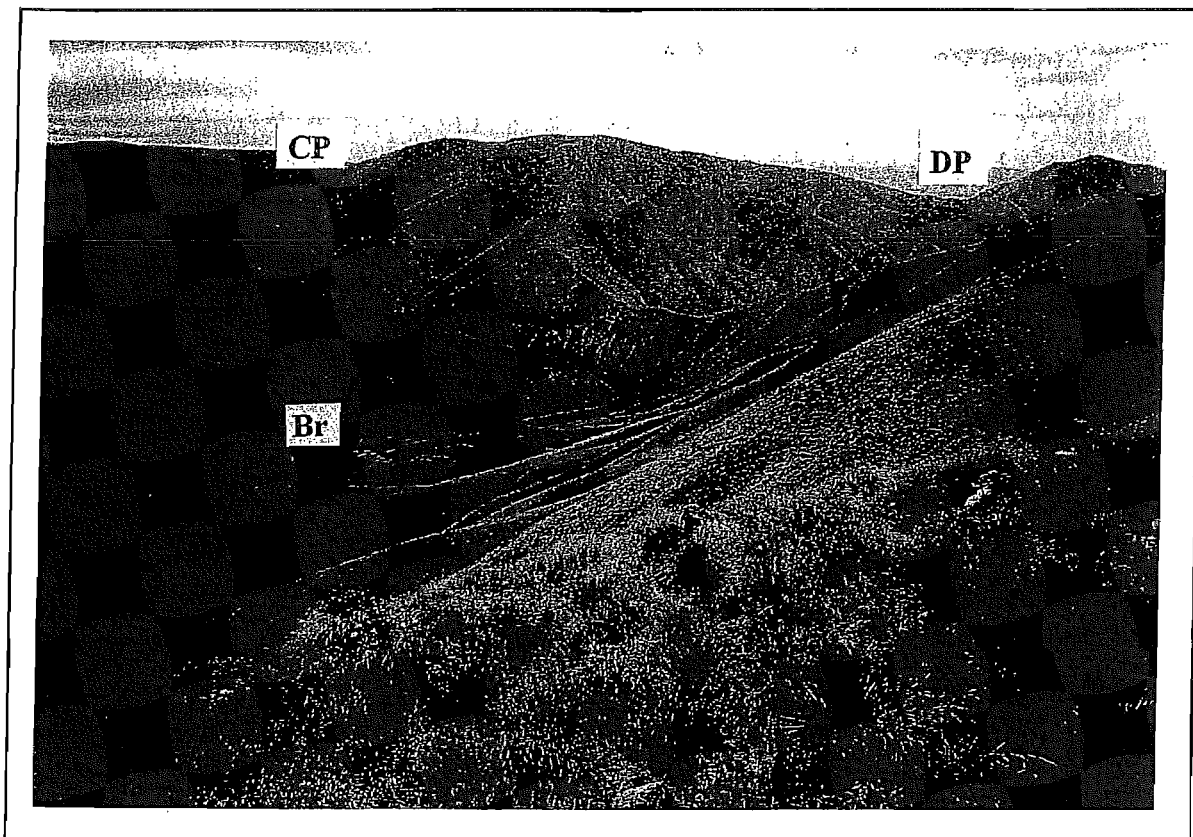


Fig 7. The Dunstan Creek corridor on the valley floor provides links to the Lindis via the Dunstan Pass (DP far right) and over the Cluden Pass (CP) to the Upper Clutha (middle distance, left of centre). Below the pass the stockbridge (Br) can be seen in the valley floor (see Fig 16) and it is proposed that all land within the gorge, upstream of the bridge, should become conservation land.

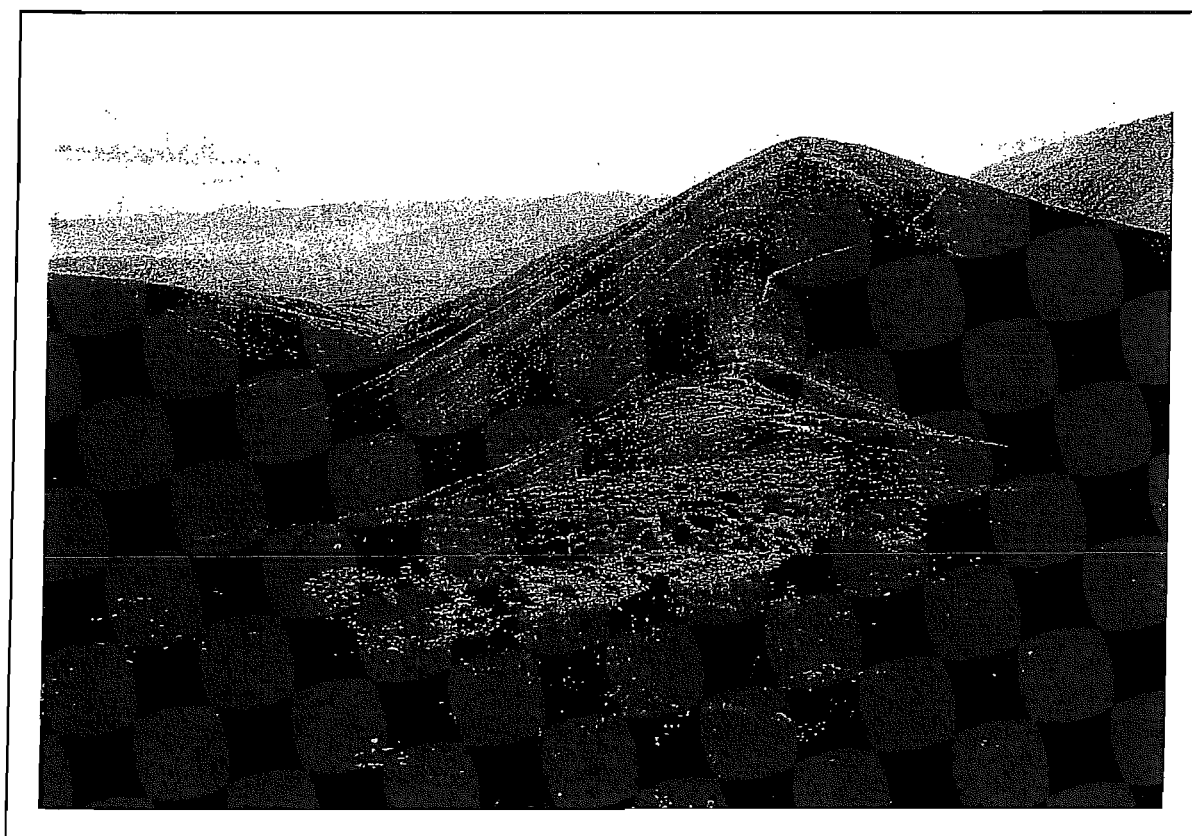


Fig 8. Looking down to Cluden Pass from Dunstan Peak, showing part of the extensive track system which should be available for public foot, mountain bike and horse use, and might be considered for 4WD use with the runholder's consent. Cluden and Timburn Stations can be seen (left of the pass).



Fig 9. Dunstan Peak is an outlier of the Dunstan Mountains and provides excellent views of the surrounding district. This makes it an attractive destination for day trips. The slopes in the foreground appear to be capable of ecologically sustainable pastoral use and therefore suitable for freeholding.



Fig 10. Mount St Bathans is a prominent feature which stands out from all over the Maniototo and Upper Clutha. It therefore attracts attention and invites recreational activities, but access is currently a problem. Tenure review provides an opportunity to improve this situation.



Fig 11. Mount St Bathans invites recreational activities on, over and along the range. Public enjoyment would be greatly enhanced through establishment of an easement to the highest point on the track (cairn on the skyline), and from that point (on foot, mountain bike or skis) on to the summit.

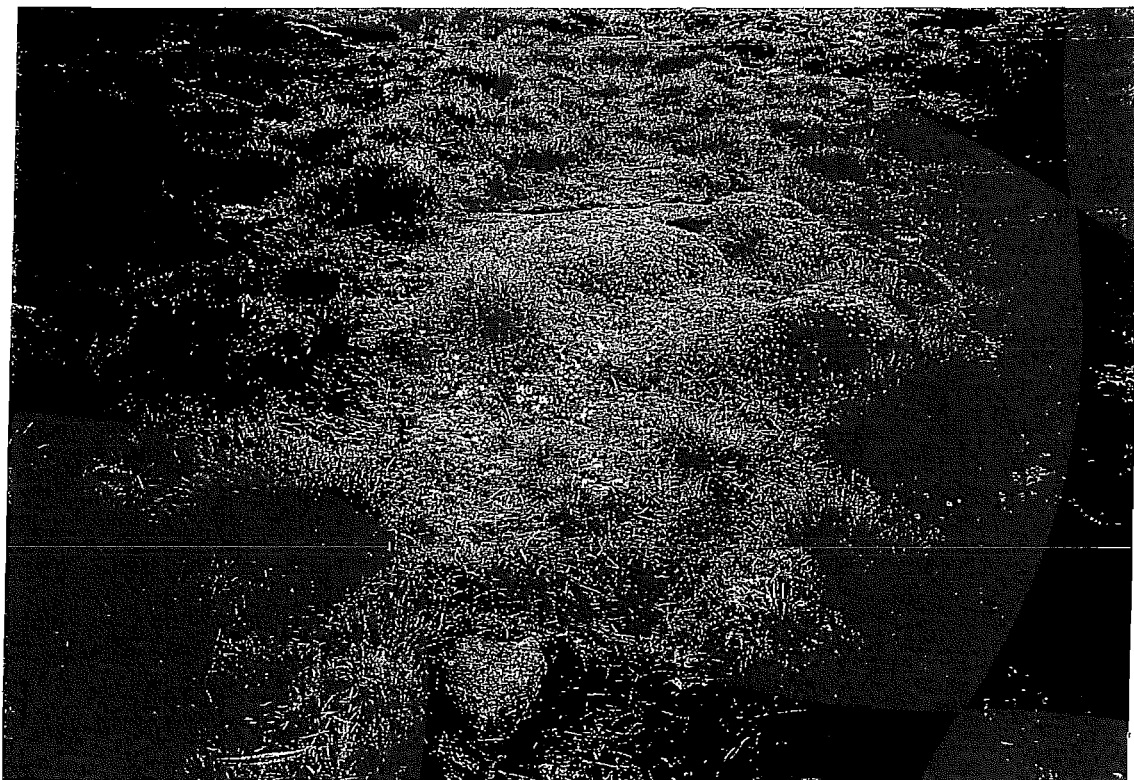


Fig 12. Tussock grasslands and cushionfields on Dunstan Peak and in Sawtooth Creek were identified by PNAP surveys which recommended two areas for protection (RAP Dunstan B2 and B3). These areas should be included in a wider area to be returned to full Crown ownership and control.

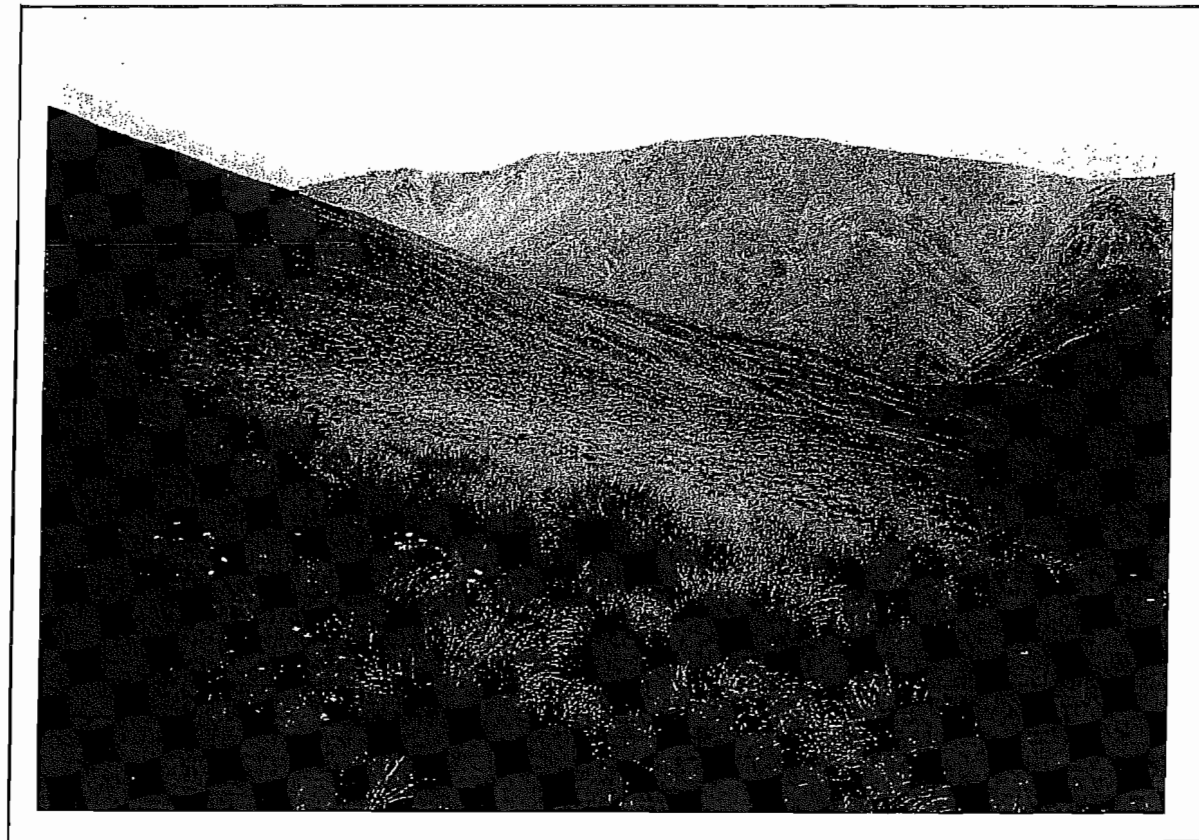


Fig 13. The catchment of Sawtooth Creek contains a good representative example of an altitude sequence of vegetation from valley floor to 1,500m which was identified by PNAP surveys as an RAP. It forms part of the wider area which should be transferred to DOC as an outcome of tenure review.

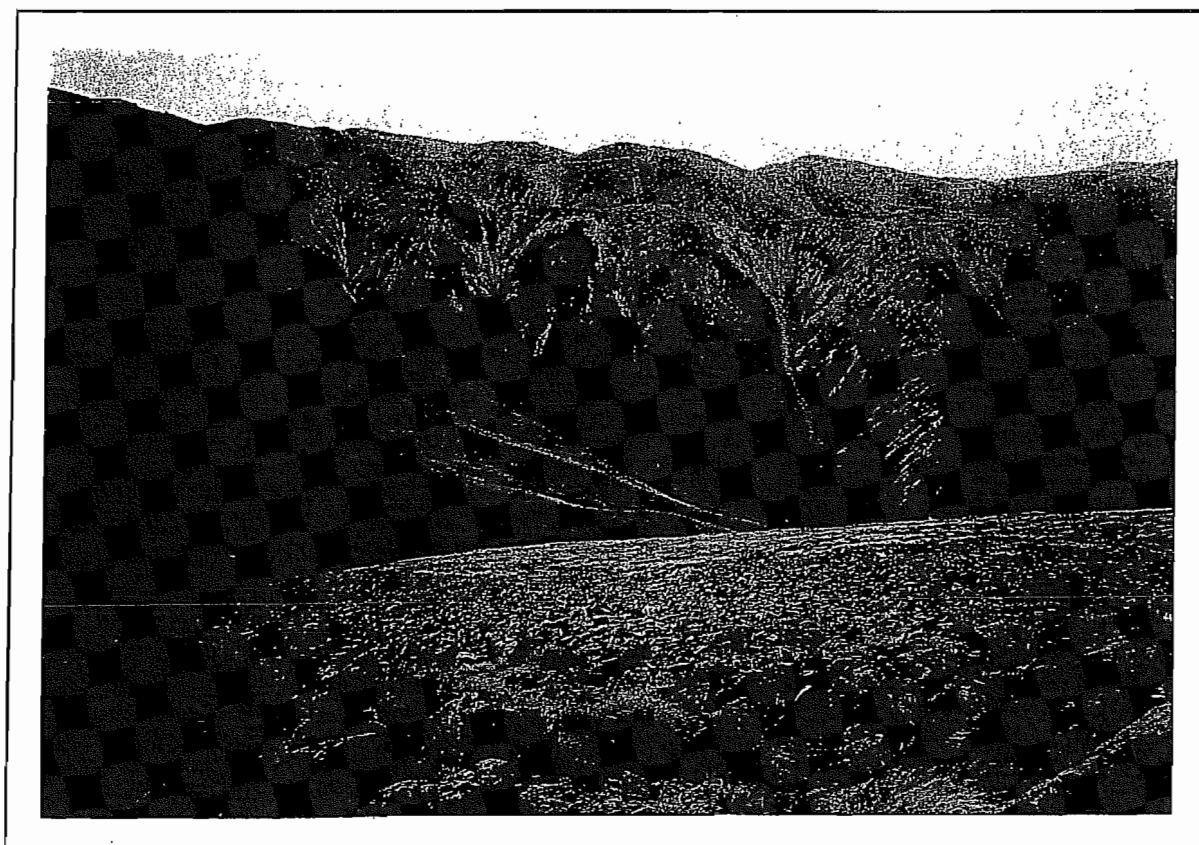


Fig 14. The head of Rocks Creek, together with all of the St Bathans range above about 1200m is classified as LUC Class VIII land (incapable of ecologically sustainable pastoral use). This should be returned to full Crown ownership and control, and transferred to DOC for public use and enjoyment.



Fig 15. Looking into the catchment of Pass Creek on the Dunstan Peak side of Mt St Bathans lease. It is suggested that the boundary of freehold and conservation land (dotted line) could follow the fence and run down the spur on the true right of the catchment, to meet Dunstan Creek at the stock bridge.

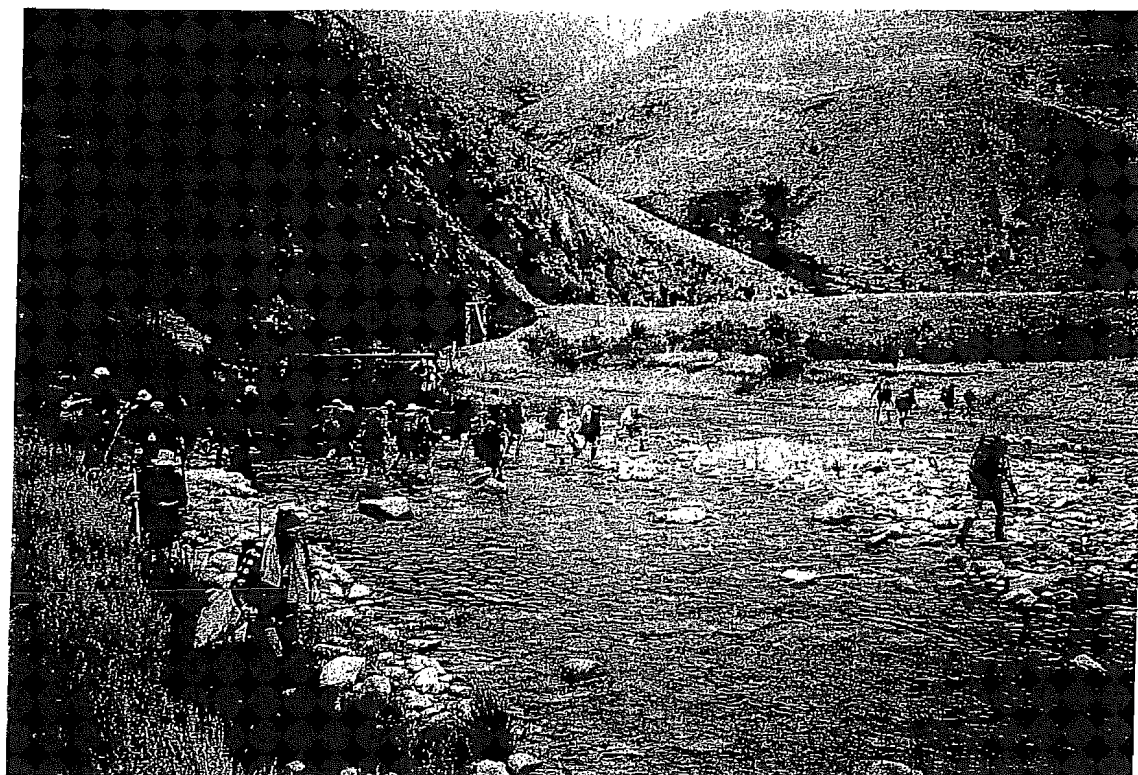


Fig 16. The Goldfields Cavalcade walkers cross Dunstan Creek at the stock bridge en route to the Dunstan Pass. The proposed boundary fence would run down the spur beyond the bridge and thus provide protection for natural conservation and landscape values in the gorge upstream of the bridge.

**APPENDIX EIGHT**

Public Access New Zealand Written Submission

# Public Access New Zealand

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 OTAGO CONSERVANCY  
 - 7 JUN 1999  
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3 June, 1999

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## Po 116 Mt St Bathans

### Rocks Creek catchment

Walking up Rocks creek provides a very rewarding experience. The sense of enclosure by steep tussock-covered faces and the rising vista of the high tops of the St Bathans Range provide a sense of anticipation and discovery. It is an easy walk into the base of the hill leading to the high tops. For the more adventurous and energetic the climb to the tops is sustained but probably provides the most direct access to the summit of the St Bathans Range. The head of the valley, in the vicinity of the stone hut, would be a pleasant place to camp for a weekend of exploring or lazing about.

The upper slopes leading to the tops are, in terms of gradient and variety, well suited for skiing if only they received reliable winter snow cover. In the years that they do, the area would be well worth visiting.

I believe that, at a minimum, the whole of the 'retirement area', upvalley from the fences bisecting the valley approximately mid-way, should be publicly reserved. However the prevailing snow tussock cover in the whole of this valley needs to be retained. The south facing slopes in particular are in good order and it would be a great pity if these end up being depleted or replaced by exotic pasture. I believe that you should be looking at ways of retaining the tussock grassland character of the whole of the Rocks Creek catchment.

In terms of public access provision it is essential that year-round, secure access be provided up Rocks Creek from the Hawkdun Runs Road. I do not see any point in encouraging vehicle access. I believe that public access should be confined to foot, horse, or mountain bike.

### Wilding pines

The *Pinus contorta* planted at the stone hut in Rocks Creek should be removed as these are spreading.

There is a major problem with spread from the plantations beside the Hawkdun Runs Road, both on this run and Hawkdun Station. They will be providing a major seed source for miles around. Unless something is done shortly wilding spread in the upper Manuherikia-Hawkdun area will be out-of-control.



### St Bathans Range western face

I have viewed this from the ridge between Cluden and Dunstan passes. From this distance it appears that the existing retirement fence is in a practical position and could provide the lower boundary for a St Bathans Range reserve. I have not inspected the lower slopes and are unable to offer an opinion on their 'inherent values'. However in line with our earlier expressed view over the Dunstan creek catchment I believe that the overall undeveloped tussockland character of the valley needs to be retained. It is now becoming rare that an entire enclosed catchment such as this still retains its 'original' character.

### Dunstan Peak

I had a long, hot day traversing in early January on foot from near Cambrians to beyond Cluden Pass and down to the homestead. My acceptance of a most welcome ride from part-way down the hill and back to my starting point saved me from excessive exertions (and heat exhaustion) but prevented me from having a good look at the lower slopes.

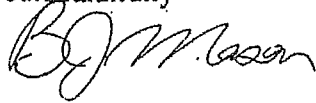
I looked at Sawtooth Creek which has been identified as an RAP. However from my recreational perspective, the Pass Creek catchment looked identical in character. Both may warrant reservation.

The upper slopes of Dunstan Peak above the highest fences warrant reservation. Although tussock cover is not as good as in most of Rocks Creek, being drier and more depleted, it is still predominantly natural in character. There are remnant patches of *C. macra* near the top of Dunstan Peak. The views are great from the summit and ridge crest to the north -well worth the effort.

Access provision should provide for foot, horse, and mountain bike access from Shepherds Flat Road up the leading ridge to Dunstan Peak and continue along the ridge to the north end of the property. This would allow future connection to Dunstan Pass, and from Cluden Pass westwards into the Richmond Valley. This spinal link would also allow future connection across the Dunstan 'main divide' saddle to the North Dunstan Scenic Reserve. This would be a most welcome access for both summer and winter recreation. In winter this route would probably provide the best access to the reserve for cross country skiing. Dunstan Peak is occasionally used for cross country skiing. This use would increase with access rights provided and greater public awareness.

The track to the north of the homestead to the tops is not particularly attractive for foot access as it is up and down and fairly long. It is better suited for vehicle use but this should remain at the owner's discretion. It is however suited for horse use and provides a key link to Cluden pass and beyond. I suggest foot, horse, and cycle rights over this. Similar provision should be made down the ridge north of Sawtooth Creek into Dunstan Creek, so allowing round trips via Dunstan creek. The whole area is very suitable for horse and mountain bike use, and masochistic walkers.

Yours faithfully



Bruce Mason  
Researcher & Spokesman